



## **Request for City Council Committee Action From the Department of Public Works**

**Date:** September 25, 2012

**To:** Honorable Sandra Colvin Roy, Chair Transportation & Public Works Committee

**Subject:** **35W Transit Access Project**

**Recommendation:**

Support specific project elements in the 35W Transit Access Project by approving the accompanying resolution.

**Previous Directives:**

Resolution 2007R-640, December 7, 2007: Supporting the development of a fiscally responsible plan and providing a high quality inside lane multi-modal BRT station at Lake Street, a high quality connection to the Midtown Greenway, and access at Lake Street as part of the I-35W access improvements and Lake Street Reconstruction.

**Prepared by:** Allan Klugman, P.E., PTOE, Traffic and Parking Services, 673-2743  
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**Approved by:**

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Steven A. Kotke, P. E., City Engineer, Director of Public Works

**Presenters:** Steve Kotke

**Reviews**

Permanent Review Committee (PRC)	NA
Civil Rights Group	NA
Policy Review Group (PRG)	NA

**Financial Impact**

No Financial Impact

**Community Impact**

Neighborhood Notification: PAC Meetings, Open Houses, Neighborhood Meetings  
City Goals: Maintain the physical infrastructure to ensure a healthy, vital and safe city.  
Comprehensive Plan: Not Applicable  
Zoning Code: Not Applicable

## Background/Supporting Information:

Before 2007 the 35W Transit Access Project had grown to include mainline freeway expansion from 42<sup>nd</sup> Street to the 94 Commons corridor; replacement of nine bridges in the 35W corridor between Franklin Avenue and 38<sup>th</sup> Street; movement of freeway ramps from 35<sup>th</sup> and 36<sup>th</sup> Streets to 38<sup>th</sup> Street; and the addition of an entrance ramp from Lake Street to 35W northbound, an exit ramp from 35W southbound to Lake Street, and an exit ramp from 35W northbound to 28<sup>th</sup> Street; and provision for a potential future transit station, all at a cost of more than \$500 million, and the City's only option was to accept or reject the entire project.

The City Council passed a resolution on the 35W Transit Access Project on December 7, 2007 which directed staff to develop a menu of options for a fiscally responsible plan with a high quality inside lane multi-modal BRT station at Lake Street, a high quality connection to the Midtown Greenway, and access at Lake Street as part of the 35W access improvements, with the highest priority given to regional efforts to promote the use of transit, and since then City of Minneapolis staff have been working to implement this direction.

The City of Minneapolis and its partners – Hennepin County as project lead, the Minnesota Department of Transportation, and Metro Transit – have been working and meeting frequently over the past five years to plan and design the project elements of the 35W Transit Access Project to 30% complete plans, while defining the project as reaching only from 28<sup>th</sup> Street at the north to 31<sup>st</sup> Street at the south.

To date the project team has developed a menu of options, as presented in the attached map, at a total cost of \$151 million. The individual components included:

1. Freeway improvements including four bridges in the 35W corridor between 28<sup>th</sup> Street and 31<sup>st</sup> Street, including constructing moving lanes around the new inline transit station described below. This project element is projected to cost \$46 million.
2. A new high quality inside lane multi-modal transit station near Lake Street will significantly improve Bus Rapid Transit service on 35W at the freeway level and transit patrons using buses on Lake Street. Connections for pedestrians and bicyclists between the transit station and the Midtown Greenway will be provided via a high quality off-street "green crescent" trail. The transit station will provide a comfortable and convenient location for transit patrons to wait for buses, ticket vending, and other transit passenger amenities, including potential future programming for commercial activity. This project element is projected to cost \$43 million.
3. A new exit from southbound 35W to Lake Street will provide direct access to Lake Street and surrounding destinations, relieve approximately 25% of the traffic demand on the 35W southbound exit to 35<sup>th</sup> Street, improve freeway operation and safety by reducing weaving traffic conflicts between the 31<sup>st</sup> Street entrance and the 35<sup>th</sup> Street exit; and it may be a catalyst for Lake Street revitalization. This project element is projected to cost \$22 million.
4. While a new entrance from Lake Street to 35W northbound would provide direct access from Lake Street to the freeway, it would do so at a substantial cost due to necessary replacement of the 26<sup>th</sup> Street and Franklin bridges over 35W and additional property acquisition for a wider freeway section north of 28<sup>th</sup> Street. This project element is projected to cost \$37 million.
5. A new exit from northbound 35W to 28<sup>th</sup> Street would provide direct access from the freeway to popular South Minneapolis destinations including neighborhoods, health care facilities, retail, employment centers, educational facilities, cultural centers, social services and other destinations; reduce traffic demand along 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and through critical intersections at 31<sup>st</sup> Street and at Lake Street; improve transit service times along Lake Street; relieve approximately 25% of the traffic demand on the 35W northbound exit to 31<sup>st</sup> Street; and

improve freeway operation and safety by reducing weaving traffic conflicts between the 35<sup>th</sup> Street entrance and the 31<sup>st</sup> Street exit. However, it would also require additional property acquisition; it would increase traffic volume along 28<sup>th</sup> Street, impacting all users of 28<sup>th</sup> Street, including residents; and this traffic movement can be served today by exiting at 31<sup>st</sup> Street and traveling north along 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. This project element is projected to cost \$3 million.

The attached resolution has been drafted to recommend support for the following components with a total project cost of \$114 million.

1. A high quality inside lane multi-modal BRT station at Lake Street, along with a high quality bike and pedestrian connection to the Midtown Greenway, as the City's highest priority;
2. Freeway improvements between 28<sup>th</sup> Street and 31<sup>st</sup> Street to accommodate the successful regional operation of BRT;
3. A new exit from southbound 35W to Lake Street; and
4. A new exit from northbound 35W to 28<sup>th</sup> Street.

The new entrance from Lake Street to 35W northbound should not continue to be a part of the project.

Stormwater management for the new elements of the project should be included as a project cost. It is also important that the design for the transit station accommodate future programming for commercial activity.

Attachment: Project Map  
Draft Resolution

Cc: Council Member Robert Lilligren, Ward 6  
Council Member Elizabeth Glidden, Ward 8  
Council Member Meg Tuthill, Ward 10